Russians can contract for the remaining quantity of 10,000 Mts. of tobacco within the calender year 1992 in terms of the protocol.

Speed Post Facility

116. SHRI BHADRESWAR GOHAIN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given their permission to carry mails by night superfast buses;

(b) whehter Government propose to introduce speed post facilities to more areas in Assam; and

(c) if so, what are the names of the places to be covered by speed post facilities?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Introducton of Speed Post Service to new areas is an on going process. As and when a proposal is received, the same is examined keeping in view commercial and market viability.

Cartel of suppliers of Silver Plated Contacts of Telecom Factory in Calcutta

117. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the suppliers of Silver plated contacts to telecom factory, Calcutta have formed a group in response to the factory's tender and offered a simple price for the material;

(b) whether the sanctity of the tender has been defeated;

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to discourage cartel amongst the suppliers; and

(d) what are the facts and details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) No Sir, there was no cartel formation in this case as the price bids of the tenderers were not all identical.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) As and when cartel formation is noticed, the entire process of tendering is done afresh.

(d) Does not arise.

Post Offices and Telephone facility to the Villages

118. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1904 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 10th March, 1992 and state:

(a) what is the number of villages that were without a post office at the end of the financial year 1991-92;

(b) what is the number of villages having telephone facility in the country; and

(c) what are the plans of Government to cover rural India by the network of telecommunication during the Eighth Five Year Plan period?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) As per the latest information available, there are 478250 villages without post offices in the country.

(b) As on 31-3-92, there were 75257 villages having telephone facility in the country.

(c) During the Eighth Five Year Plan period, the Government propose to :—

(1) to provide telephone facility to all Gram Panchayats and an additional 1.5 lakhs other villages dur-

ing the 8th Five Year Plan period (1992—97) subject to availability of resources.

(ii) to replace all manual exchanges with electronic exchange by March, 1994.

(iii) to replace all strowger type MAX-III exchanges and all line finder type MAX-II Exchanges by electronic exchanges during 8th Plan period.

(iv) to replace all life expired and worn out switches as and when they become life expired.

Global Tenders for Cellular Mobile Telephones

119. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications have floated global tenders for providing cellular mobile telephones in the metropolitan cities;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is no response from the major manufacturers of the cellular mobile telephones; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken by Government to implement the scheme?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) No, Sir, the tender floated by the Department was limited to Indian Companies only.

(b) and (c) The question of receiving direct bid from any of the major manufacturers does not arise as there is no major manufacturer of sellular mobile telephones in the country yet. However some bidders have shown tie-up with such manufacturers/operators which are foreign based.

Decline in the Profit of MTNL

120. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited has registered a sharp decline in profit during the year 1990-91 despite providing a record number of connections;

(b) if so what are the reasons for this decline and losses; and

(c) what steps Government are taking to make it viable?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) and (b) Sir, during the year 1990-91 the income of the Company increased by 12.4 per cent as compared to the income in the year 1989-90. However there was some decline in the Profit before Tax due chiefly to loss of earnings due to strike by a section of employees and also to certain revision in the rate of network charges payable by the Nigam to the Department of Telcom.

(c) MTNL is already a viable and profit making organisation right from its inception in the year 1986.

मध्य प्रदेश में दूरभाष कने शनों के लिए प्रतीक्षा-सूची

121. **श्री राधाकिशन मालवीय :**
श्री सुरेश पचौरी :

क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) 31 मार्च, 1992 की स्थिति के अनुसार मध्य प्रदेश में दूरभाष कनेक्शनों के लिए जिले-वार प्रतीक्षा सूची में आवेदकों की श्रेणी-वार संख्या कितनी-कितनी है; और

(ख) प्रतीक्षा सूचियों में दर्ज सभी आवेदकों को कब तक दूरभाष कनेक्शन मिल जाने की संभावना है ?